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ABSTRACT

Outcomes of a workshop to develop specific skills for observing and coaching classroom teachers in the Atlanta (Georgia) Public Schools are described in this report. The workshop was designed to train teacher leaders, mentors, peer coaches, and administrators in nonconfrontational communication skills for conducting teacher evaluation composed of performance-based observation and feedback. Seventeen out of 33 participants responded to a workshop evaluation questionnaire in which they indicated that they used workshop skills daily or weekly in their task performance and that utilizing positive communication skills improves individual job performance. (LMI)

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EVALUATION OF THE

COACHING TEACHERS TO HIGH LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHOP

PERFORMANCE LEARNING SYSTEMS, INCORPORATED WORKSHOPS

DEPARTMENT OF RESEACH AND EVALUATION

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Report No. 20, Vol. 24, 8/90

EA 023 302

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EVALUATION OF THE COACHING TEACHERS TO HIGHER LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS PERFORMANCE LEARNING, INCORPORATED WORKSHOPS

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August, 1990

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Coaching Teachers to Higher Levels of Effectiveness Workshops by Performance Learning Systems, Incorporated were held July 10-14, 1989 and October 6, 1989 for 33 administrators. The pupose was to train experienced teacher leaders, peer coaches, mentors and administrator in specific skills to observe and coach classroom teachers in their lesson presentations.

Seventeen of the participants responded to a questionnaire concerning knowledge and skills gained in the workshops. All responses were positive and indicated the skills are used daily or weekly as they perform their assigned tasks. The belief was expressed by many respondents that the workshop would be beneficial to other administrators. With that strong endorsement by the respondent participants it is recommended that the program be made available for other administrators.

COACHING TEACHERS IS HIGHER LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS
PERFORMANCE LEARNING, INCORPORATED WORKSHOPS

The Performance Learning Workshops were held at Drew Elementary School on July 10-14, 1989 with a follow-up on October 6, 1989 as part of the summer Staff Development Workshops. The Director was Dr. Chuck Fuller and Dr. Ioma K. Glover was Convener. The consultant for Coaching Teachers to Higher Levels of Effectiveness was Dr. Steven Barkley of Performance Learning Systems, Incorporated. The schedule for the week is included as part of this report in the Appendix.

The course purpose was

> to train experienced teacher leaders, peer coaches, mentors and administrators to understand the concepts and components of an effective instructional coaching program. The participants were trained in specific skills to observe and coach classroom teachers in their presentation of lessons.

The course description follows:

> The COACHING course is designed to give teacher observers the skills necessary to identify teacher strengths as well as areas for growth, based on the research on effective teaching. Current research on the coaching process, including the differences between coaching and teacher evaluation, are explored and synthesized in a format focused on performance-based observation and feedback. Specific skills are trained to enable the coach to communicate with the individual being coached in a clear, positive, non-punitive and non-confrontational manner. The skills necessary to achieve the positive climate essential to the coaching process, are trained and practiced.

The course objectives were

> To increase peer coaches'/mentors' impact on individual teachers' performances by giving each participant:
>
> a. Knowledge of research on practices necessary to attain internalization of a skill.
> b. Knowledge of stages of skill development present in teachers being coached.
> c. Knowledge of research-proven effective teaching practices:
> 1. Questionning Techniques
> 2. Verbal Skills
> 3. Nonverbal Communication
> 4. Delivery of Content
> d. Practice in identifying these practices as well as recognizing their absence.
> e. Communication skills to effect positive change in teacher behavior based on current practice and educational research.

The emphasis for the 33 administrators was to increase peer coaches' mentors' impact on individual performances by giving each participant effective teaching practice in coaching.

The components of the sessions were:

Questioning strategies and skills
Non-verbal communication
Conferencing strategies
Learning modality preference
Concept formation.

The major activity was for participants to learn to utilize different skills in coaching teachers and reporting to them what was observed.

The evaluation consisted of a two page questionnaire designed for self-reports of the improved ability to coach teachers using
open-ended questions
confirmatory paraphrasing
positive phasing
empathy statements
approval statements and,
positive non-verbal communication.

A second question asked respondents to indicate the frequency with which they used verbal skills in coaching and effective teaching practices.

Participants responded to the questionnaire which was mailed to them at the end of the 1989-90 academic year.

Reviewing the compilation of responses, participants in the coaching workshops were very positive in their evaluation of the experience. The summary of responses shows that the participants believed they improved their skills considerably or greatly.

RESPONSES TO QUESTION 1

During the time since the Coaching Workshop, evaluate your improved ability to coach teachers using the following skills:

	Greatly	Considerably	Little	None
Open-Ended Questions	7	9		
Confirmatory Paraphrasing	8	8		
Positive Phrasing	8	7		
Empathy Statements	7	7	2	
Approval Statements	9	6		
Positive Non-Verbal Communication	6	9		
Total Responses	45	46	2	

The second question asked the frequency the skills were used during the year.

The group of the participants responding to the questionnaire indicated they used the skills at least once a week, but more often the skills in coaching were used once a day or several times a day.

RESPONSES TO QUESTION 2

During the past academic year, since the Coaching Workshops in July 1989, how frequently have you had an opportunity to use the following skills in your job assignment?

	Once a Month	Once a Week	Once a Day	Several Times a Day
The Following Verbal Skills in Coaching:				
Open-Ended Questions		1	2	12
Confirmatory Paraphrasing		5	4	6
Positive Phrasing		3	2	10
Emphathy Statements	1	5	2	7
Approval Statements		1	2	11
Your Knowledge of the Following Effective Teaching Practices				
Effective Questionning Techniques	1	4	4	4
Learning Modality Preference	4	4	2	3
Concept Formation	6	4		3
Total Responses	12	27	18	56

The third portion of the questionnaire asked participants to relate examples of the use of the strategies they had been taught.

Examples of these responses which are representative of the group follows.

Open-ended questions were used in conferences with students and teachers.

Confirmatory paraphasing and emphathy statements were used in conferences with students and teachers.

"I used open-ended questions continuously as I asked questions of teachers that allowed them to respond freely, i.e. A teacher was experiencing problems with students' discipline. Through my conferences with her utilizing the techniques, she was able to see her errors and change her strategies."

"Utilizing approval statements helped to improve teachers' self-esteem. Without the training I would have cited the incorrect techniques being used, but I changed strategies, giving approval of successful method then moving to open-ended questions."

"During a post-observation conference with a teacher whose lesson presentation was quite flawed I used open and closed-ended questions, approval statements, confirmatory paraphrasing, along with positive non-verbal communication . . . . I believe using the acquired conferencing skills enabled me to keep the conference going. It concluded with the teacher agreeing to pursue some activities which would help to improve lesson design and delivery."

"Steve Bradley's workshop enabled me to help analyze effective teaching practices in a much more positive manner. I was able to show my teacher that my intent was to improve the quality of instructional delivery and not to intimidate them or criticize."

"The coaching methods of questions have also helped me in dealing with parent/teacher conferences. The workshop has been very beneficial to me in performing my job as principal."

"I was able to use empathy statements and strategies with two new faculty members. If I had not had the training the outcomes may have been different."

"Open-ended questionning has allowed me to let people respond and continually talk, thus, helping me become a better listener."

"Learning modality preferences have been discussed in team meetings as a part of our on-going staff development. Information from the training was shared."

"During GTOI conferencing, one teacher had more than 5 NI's. I needed to put him/her on an extended form. I was able to use all coaching skills effectively, especially when he/she gave personal excuses. I used the empathy skills."

"In faculty meeting a teacher was rendering excuses as to why she could not do something in homeroom due to lack of time and too much to do. I listened carefully; never said any thing negative, but took all her negative statements and made positive phrasing and empathy statements until she agreed with me that certain duties could be done with no problem or additional time."

"As a new principal I have to be extremely sensitive to the manner in which I related to my staff. Asking open-ended questions and using paraphasing during post-observation conferences and during annual evaluation conferences improved communication immensely."

"I have used all of the strategies during staff development/inservice meetings this school year during team meetings. I demonstrated what I expected teachers to implement. Teachers became aware of positive non-verbal communication,

confirmatory paraphasing, etc. Teachers, in turn, were able to help students develop approval statements, empathy statements, open-ended questions, etc."

From these examples of the use of the techniques taught, it can be seen that the skills were used by the participants in their daily tasks, but even more important, were demonstrated and taught to faculty members to use with students. Parents were positively affected through the principal participants use of the skills during parent conferences.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

For those participants who responded to the questionnaire it is clear that the week long workshop had long lasting effects which translates into positive job related competencies. The skills of listening to what people are really saying and improved communication have a positive effect to the job performance which can be beneficial to most school personnel. From the responses of the participants the program was a success and would be beneficial to other personnel who participate in a similar future workshop.

R & E/LF:lp/9-17-90

APPENDIX

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUMMER STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Assistant Principals, Curriculum Specialists

Area Resource Teachers

COACHING TEACHERS TO HIGHER LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Dr. Chuck Fuller, Director

Drew Elementary School
409 East Lake Boulevard
Atlanta, Georgia 30317

Convener
Dr. Ioma K. Glover
Staff Support Services

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ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUMMER STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Assistant Principals, Curriculum Specialists
Area Resource Teachers

July 10 - 14, 1989
8:00 - 3:00

COACHING TEACHERS TO HIGHER LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS
Consultant - Steve Barkley
Performance Learning Systems, Inc.

Monday	**Day I**
8:00 - 8:30	Greetings and Introductions
8:30 - 11:30	Defining Coaching Goals of the Workshop
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 3:00	Questioning Skills for Coaching
Tuesday	**Day II**
8:00 - 11:30	Conferencing - Feedback Skills
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 3:00	Non-Verbal Communication
Wednesday	**Day III**
8:00 - 11:30	Coaching the Effective Questioning Research
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 3:00	Observing, Planing and Conferencing
Thursday	**Day IV**
8:00 - 11:30	Resistances
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 3:30	Conferencing Strategies
Friday	**Day V**
8:00 - 11:30	Learning Styles
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 3:30	"Putting It All Together"

During the time since the Coaching Workshop, evaluate your improved ability to coach teachers using the following skills:

	Greatly	Considerably	Little	None
Open-Ended Questions				
Confirmatory Paraphrasing				
Positive Phrasing				
Empathy Statements				
Approval Statements				
Positive Non-Verbal Communication				

During the past academic year since the Coaching Workshops in July 1989, how frequently have you had an opportunity to use the following skills in your job assignment?

	Once a Month	Once a Week	Once a Day	Several Times a Day
The Following Verbal Skills in Coaching:				
Open-Ended Questions				
Confirmatory Paraphrasing				
Positive Phrasing				
Empathy Statements				
Approval Statements				
Your Knowledge of the Following Effective Teaching Practices				
Effective Questioning Techniques				
Learning Modality Preference				
Concept Formation				

Please relate three examples when you have used any of the strategies listed above and how the outcome was different than if you had not had the training.

1. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

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_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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